

CLEARING SEWER BLOCKAGES IN PRIVATE PROPERTY PROCEDURE

1. Scope

The Clearing Sewer Blockages in Private Property Procedure (this 'Procedure') applies to all premises in the declared sewerage service area.

2. Purpose

This Procedure outlines Council's position in relation to undertaking repairs to and clearing blockages in the sewerage system and clarifies the responsibilities of Council and residents.

3. Related Documents

Primary

Retail Water and Sewerage Service Provider - Management and Functions Policy

Legislative reference

Plumbing and Drainage Act 2018 s 70(1)

Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act 2008 ss 161, 676

Related documents

Council's 'TEMPLATE – Private Works Quotation – Sewer' (ECM – A1741203)

CMDG Standard Drawing No CMDG-S-030

4. Definitions

To assist in interpretation, the following definitions shall apply:

Council	Livingstone Shire Council.
CMDG	Capricorn Municipal Development Guidelines.
Customer	1. The owner, the owner's agent, or an occupier of a premises located in the declared sewerage service area; or 2. A licensed plumber appointed by the owner, their agent or an occupier.
Declared Sewerage Service Area	The area declared by Council (at its meeting on 9 September 2014) as a sewerage service area pursuant to s 676(2) of the <i>Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act 2008</i> and any subsequent amendments pursuant to s 161(6).
Drainage	As defined in the Act.
Licensed Plumber	A plumber who holds a Queensland Building and Construction Commission Plumbing and Drainage Trade Contractor Licence.
Occupier	As defined in the Act.
Owner	As defined in the Act.

Plumbing	As defined in the Act.
Point of Connection	The house connection branch as shown on CMDG Drawing No CMDG-S-030.
Premises	As defined in the Act.
Private Drains	Has the same meaning as property service (for a sewerage service) in the <i>Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act 2008</i> .
Sewerage System	As defined in the Act.
the Act	<i>Plumbing and Drainage Act 2018</i> .

5. Procedure

Section 70(1) of the Act requires the owner of premises to take all reasonable steps to ensure all plumbing and drainage on their premises is kept in good condition and operates properly.

It is not Council's intention to undertake repairs to, or clear blockages, in private drains as this would put Council in competition with private sector plumbers.

5.1 Responsibilities

The responsibilities for specific sections of the sewerage system are defined as follows:

a) Owner

The owner is responsible for maintaining and if necessary, replacing the private drain to the point of connection.

b) Council

Council is responsible for maintaining the sewerage system within the declared sewerage service area up to and including the point of connection.

5.2 Private Sector Plumbers

- a) Customers are to appoint a licensed plumber if the blockage appears to be in private drains.
- b) In the event a licensed plumber establishes a blockage is in Council's sewerage system, they must notify Council immediately to arrange for Council to clear the blockage.
- c) If the licensed plumber determines the blockage/fault is in Council's sewerage system, they will be reimbursed a maximum of one standard hour (up to a maximum \$250).
- d) Council is mindful that occasionally a reimbursement of greater than one hour may be sought. In these instances, the Manager Water & Waste Operations has the authority to assess and approve reimbursement if considered appropriate.
- e) If the licensed plumber makes an incorrect assessment and the blockage/fault is in the private drains, Council will recover all costs it incurs from the property owner using Council's private works rates as a basis for charging.

5.3 Attendance at Site

Council will attend premises to clear blockages:

- a) When blockages impact upon several neighbouring premises concurrently;
- b) If a licensed plumber has identified the blockage is in Council's sewerage system;
- c) If there is sewage inundation inside the premises; or
- d) On public holidays when a customer, after exhausting all avenues, is unable to engage a licensed plumber.

6. Changes to this Procedure

This Procedure is to remain in force until otherwise amended/replaced by the General Manager Transport and Utilities.

7. Repeals/Amendments

This procedure repeals the Livingstone Shire Council Procedure titled 'Clearing Sewer Blockages in Private Property Procedure (v1.0)'

Version	Date	Action
1.0	15/03/2022	New Procedure – Approved
2.0	12/09/2025	Amended Procedure Approved – Related Documents, Definitions and Section 5 updated

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